

THE LABOUR ORGANISER

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Topics of the Month

THE Merthyr by-election result is to hand as we write, and our first thought is one of satisfaction that Keir Hardie's old seat has been true to the substance and not the shadow of that for which he fought. Our congratulations must go out to our local friends, who have given the world this vindication, and our congratulations also extend to our old friend, Mr. George Morris, the National Organiser for Wales, and to Mrs. Andrews, the Woman Organiser for Wales; the ceaseless service of both these stalwarts has not a little contributed to the result. The result is none the less satisfactory because of the whispers that were heard of the possibility of greater mischief being done by the dog-eat-dog tactics of the warring "united front," and of the possibility of the united forces of Liberalism and Toryism snatching a victory out of the divisions and diversions so created. Well this has not happened, and there is satisfaction to every true Socialist that the wreckers have both lost their deposits.

That the Liberal had the chance we speak of cannot be denied any more than that on public showing he ought to have done better. There is a lesson here for other electioneers that must not be lost sight of. Why is it that the Liberal candidates to-day so often fizzle at the polls after a fairly formidable campaign? What at one time was characteristic of Labour fights, and is, indeed, characteristic of them to some extent to-day, is quite a common thing about Liberal contests. We have known a Liberal meeting at which more people were present than actually voted for the candidate, but the answer to our question does not lie solely in the statement that "Liberalism is played out" or that

the "Liberal Party is dead." These statements only partly explain the matter. The truth really lies in the fact that Liberalism has lost its agents and lost its local organisations. Its ward and polling district machinery has fallen to pieces in most places, and when a contest comes along, though one may rally and rouse, spend a lot in posters and in noise, yet the absence of machinery makes defeat inevitable.

Labour has experienced the same thing. Only in rare instances does a candidate of any Party secure success without the preparatory and election work of local committees, and above all of a strong polling day machine. Labour has learnt this lesson in the past, though by no means completely. Shouting and enthusiasm are all very well in their way, but it is the machine which polls the votes, and though opportunist Liberal candidates may still scrounge a working class vote here and there, or a Tory vote in another place to swell their diminishing polls, yet the collapse of their political machine again and again disappoints their hopes when "tactics" might otherwise succeed. This lesson must be borne home on Labour Parties. Even to-day Labour folk are tempted to judge by the "feeling" shown everywhere, or the "atmosphere" and to neglect in time to provide an adequate polling day machine. The inevitable result is a majority much smaller than expected, or a defeat.

So often has this moral been pointed that it is extraordinary that it should need repetition to-day. Yet it does and in Labour's case it is the more blameworthy. Liberal Party machinery, where it does exist, is antiquated; the workers live in an atmosphere of the past, and they practise the electioneering of the Gladstone age. Labour workers

know better; at any rate they have been taught better, and a Labour Committee actively working, or a Labour Committee Room properly manned is the liveliest thing in electioneering known to-day. But then election agents and officers become immersed in the details of the contests; workers get drawn away to listen to this speaker and that, and the all important work of picking out workers, allotting them to Committee Rooms and drawing up time tables for their attendance thereat, and adequately staffing the rooms throughout the day, are matters which get neglected all too often. With ample material the most vital work of all gets overlooked! Committee Rooms so often are *not* opened to time, or are without workers the greater part of the day, and everything is rush and confusion at night. As we have said, this state of things explains disappointing polls, and fortunately Labour folk are learning better. Our lesson is for those who have not yet done so.

And on this question what are the comparative values of publicity stunts and systematic visitations of electors during an election? The greatest practitioner of publicity stunts in our time was Horatio Bottomley. But Horatio's men never neglected the machine. What publicity won for them, they polled. Now Labour's great and stirring public meetings, although propagandist in character, have also a publicity value, and in many Labour fights the enthusiasm so displayed added to that of parades, window shows and perhaps poster shows, mean that a great publicity effort is being put forward. It is the effect which misleads. A town may be painted red, but the steady polling and fetching-up of the residue can well confound the prophets. The Tory machine does not ordinarily leave things to chance, nor does the up-to-date Labour machine. Yet after all, electorates are fickle, forgetful factors, and so apt to share the shouting but neglect to vote. In one election within our experience we aver that in one town we saw more people wearing our Party's colours than ever polled for us; visiting the Committee Rooms we were able to foretell the failure. Three rooms had no workers, and two rooms had workers who had not gone out all

day to fetch up a single voter, though two checkers had been at work all day and the register was beautifully marked! Would it be believed, too, that we have seen many contests where for some mysterious reason checkers are employed and registers marked without anyone ever dreaming that the purpose of all this was to identify voters who had not voted, and to go out and see that they polled? There's lots more yet for some Labour Parties to learn about electioneering—which, by the way, is another reason why we ask *you* to help us extend the circulation of the "Labour Organiser."

No signs of the General Election. At least so the prophets say, and the Prime Minister has not seized the hour when the going was good. But we flatly refuse to believe those prophets who want us to believe that the Government will run its term. Maybe we give them credit for too much sagacity, but after all political history has written a direful warning to those who hang on to office. If the Government ignore this warning and hold on till the last moment it will surprise us very much. But Labour can afford to wait. There are stages to be passed. We are in the stage when the Government *might* get a workable majority. The next stage is that when Labour might just reach, or just fall short of, power—a mighty dangerous stage; then comes the time when power is with us. Our advice is to be ready for any event. In the meantime Labour's might is growing. Education is going on and our young men are growing up. Yes, we can afford to wait, if we must.

URBAN, RURAL AND PARISH COUNCIL ELECTION ORDER

As we go to press we have received from the Home Office copies of the new Statutory Rules and Orders governing the procedure at the above elections.

These new Rules are issued in accordance with the provision of the Local Government Act, 1933, and embody a number of minor changes.

We shall review these Orders in our next issue.

HOW TO GET NEW PREMISES

We are indebted to Mr. Claude Denscombe, Organiser and Agent to the Wallsend Division, for the following amazing account of how two Local Parties solved their meeting difficulties.

Mr. Denscombe writes: — "I am sending you a brief account of how two Local Parties in the Wallsend-on-Tyne Division solved their meeting place difficulty in the hope that other Parties may be inspired to go and do likewise."

WILLINGTON QUAY. This Party had met for many years in the Committee Rooms of the local Co-operative Buildings. Their membership was about 30. Assets, nil. Liabilities, many pounds.

They decided to get a place of their own. Out went an appeal which brought in the sum of £8. They secured a vacant site. Paid a few pounds down and secured a large quantity of timber on credit and then obtained permission from the Borough Council to demolish an old farm and use the material.

Next they set to work building foundations and erecting a substantial building, often working far into the night. When completed, including painting inside and out, not a PENNY had been paid for labour. The membership jumped from 30 to 170 in the first three months.

Willington Quay now has a hall with seating for 450. Kitchen, three ante-rooms, office and games rooms.

A certain amount of debt had to be incurred for timber, seating, gas-fittings, piano, etc., but this is being rapidly cleared.

FOREST HALL. This Party (23 strong) had met since its formation, in a Committee Room of the Workmen's Social Club. Funds £30.

They decided to get a building of their own, and appointed a small committee to carry it through. They first secured a site in a prominent position to rent, but with an option to buy at an agreed price within three years.

Next a very large wood and corrugated iron building (formerly a temporary church) being for sale at £125 they decided to purchase (assets £30! What lions Labour folk are). £25 down and an agreement to pay the

remainder in two half-yearly instalments and the building was theirs!

A contractor was found who was willing to pull the building down, convey it to the site and re-erect it on substantial foundations for £85, and what was perhaps even more important to them, was willing to accept half payment at the end of six months, and the remainder at the end of a year.

The building erected, members flocked in and painted it inside and out and built extensions, etc., by voluntary labour.

The membership rose from 23 to 500 odd in the first six months. Now, less than two years after the opening, loans have been repaid, the contractor's account settled, seating bought and paid for, leaving only the land to buy. About £70 and the freehold site—large enough for a permanent building, or for any extensions they may find it necessary to make—will be theirs for ever.

The buildings comprise hall to seat 500, kitchen, games rooms, conveniences, etc.

Mr. Denscombe adds that as regards both above halls the games rooms and reading rooms are open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily, and only closed during Party Meetings and Public Meetings definitely arranged by the Party.

Dances are held on two or three nights a week. Admission three-pence. Concerts are frequently arranged. A very fine library has been built up in each case.

The Greenwich Labour Party which has been engaged in consolidation and reorganisation for some little time showed an increase of £10 in income from members' contributions last year, the total reaching £313 18s. 2d. Membership at the close of the year stood at 2,509. We note that there are no less than 66 voluntary collectors in this division. Apart from this and the normal work of the Party 80 members assist in distributing the "Greenwich Citizen" each month. The Party is out to pass the 3,000 membership mark this year.

JACK CUTTER discourses on —

Making it Simple—those Victory for Socialism leaflets—the jargon of the Movement.

Quite a number of D.L.P.'s who have not yet entered the Victory for Socialism Campaign are only holding aloof because they cannot afford that thirty-five shillings a month.

Several Divisional Secretaries have been talking to me about it. We might, they say, manage it for a month or two, but unless it can be sure that we are to carry on issuing the leaflets regularly there is no use issuing them at all.

Whilst sympathising with their caution I suggested for their comfort that the Hastings Conference which passed the scheme, also passed another scheme which was saving them more than 35s. a month at the moment. The new quota scheme for by-elections has been a godsend to local parties in these days when the mortality rate of M.P.'s is so high. At the time of writing there have been about 25 by-elections which have cost local parties £9 7s. 6d. If the old scheme had been in operation it would have set them back £25, so they have saved £15 12s. 6d., which will pay the V.S. Leaflet Bill at the maximum for nine months.

Then some of my colleagues have been criticising the style, make-up and matter of leaflet No. 1, saying it is simple stuff, lacking fire, punch, vim, vigour, pungency and Uncle Tom Cobleigh and all.

"They only say it to annoy
Because they know it teases."

The leaflets are deliberately simple, I imagine, because their draughtsmen were visualising, not convinced Labour Party readers, but the simple-minded non-Labour masses to whom thinking is a real effort and who need a primer in the A.B.C. of Socialism. Obviously the first leaflet has to be of the "Cat sat on the mat" type; otherwise the dim-wits wouldn't read it.

Have you seen those adverts. of the distressed and dowdy female with a pimply face (picture 1) who is told by a radiant friend to use So-and-So face powder (picture 2) and is seen in picture 3, a vision of

ravishing and pimple-less beauty, being led down the aisle by the dashing young squire? Has it struck you that the advertisers who publish this super-tripe would not do so unless it was effective in inducing people to use So-and-So powder?

That's the kind of mentality we have to work on. The intelligent ones are nearly all in the movement already and it would be a waste of money to bombard the rest with leaflets full of the jargon of the movement to which we have become so used that we don't realise we speak almost a different language.

Where, at this moment, are the greater proportion of these "uninstructed masses" we want to get at? In the "pictures." Right! Go as the cinema is leaving, collar the first half-dozen that come out and say to them: "Comrades, do you realise that democracy is in danger! Our liberties are threatened by the foul canker of dictatorship. Only by Socialism and the transformation of our social system from one of production for private gain to production for the common good can mankind hope to reach the co-operative commonwealth?"

They would gape at you and murmur to each other in the language of the apparatus which had just held them enthralled:

"Dis guy's nuts!"

I remember a well-meaning old gent, who was intensely interested in some form of social work, attending a Trades Council meeting to tell the delegates all about his hobby. He listened to the business of the Council in amazement. "However do you remember what all these initials mean?" he asked me afterwards. "N.U.R. and T.U.C. I know, but what is A.S.L.E. & F., A.U.B.T.W. and N.F.B.T.O.; who and what is Nudaw and why is I.C.C.?"

Last summer I listened to a young Marxist at a Glasgow street corner meeting discoursing learnedly on the Materialist Conception of History which he referred to a thousand times as the M.C.H. to the obvious

BANNERS

FOR

LABOUR ORGANISATIONS.

SEND FOR ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE,
AND QUOTATIONS.

GEORGE TUTILL,
83, City Road, London, E.C.1

mystification of all except the few initiated.

So we must not be impatient if our first few issues of the V.S. leaflets seem ultra-simple, remembering they are for the edification of people who think political economy has something to do with saving money by Act of Parliament, who read the *Mirror* or *Sketch*, who never attend any public gathering unless it is an entertainment, whose minds are doped with cinema, turf or dog-track and who hurriedly switch over to another wave-length whenever a talk is announced on their radio.

It will be a tough job to convince these morons, but that is what the campaign is for.

Congratulations to Head Office for its valuable tip on Rents and Repairs. This is great stuff and if acted on will mean much extra work for party secretaries, but work of the kind that does real good.

BEWARE PERFORMING RIGHTS.

A Correspondent Writes:

"Our Labour Party have a dance club which holds monthly dances, the music being provided by a radiogram. The general public are not admitted, only club members.

"The question is are we liable to pay the Royalties Licence for the use of records played on these occasions?

"Have you any information regarding this matter that would apply to our dance club?

"Another point, please:—

"We are installing a loud speaker instrument for open-air work. Could you please let me know if there are

any "Band Tune Records" that are not copyright, and if so where they could be purchased."

The point raised by our correspondent is of fairly general interest. During recent years the Performing Rights Society has sprung into prominence as the defenders of copyright holders, and to-day it is a risky thing to infringe musical copyrights. The Society is an extremely active one with unknown and untold ramifications in all parts of the country. We are of the opinion that copyright records played at monthly dances are an infringement which would incur the intervention of the Society named if, as is most likely, the matter was reported to them. The Society, however, grants licenses permitting performances, but the extent of these licenses is not known to us. The same remarks apply to the use of loud speaker instruments in playing copyright records for open-air work. Detection here is much more probable.

It will interest our readers however, to know that we have been informed that there are a number of records on the market outside the purview of the Performing Rights Society. We cannot take the risk of saying whose records these are, but an examination of the inscriptions on gramophone records is worth while. We imagine that for ordinary outdoor work there is a sufficiently good choice of records for most purposes, but friends who desire a high class musical programme will appreciate, of course, that the more expensive records are covered by copyright, and that it is well, if the occasion justifies it, to pay the fee and ensure safety.

OUR YOUTH PAGE

By W.
ARTHUR
PEACOCK

WONDERFUL work for Socialism is being done all over the country by young men and women and the searchlight of publicity does not shine upon it always as brightly as it might. I am not out to throw bouquets but I do feel that the wonderful work being done by Maurice Hackett and his Clarion Socialist Squad is worth a great deal more praise and publicity than it is receiving.

About Maurice Hackett there is need to say very little. Everyone knows him. He has addressed young Socialist gatherings in all parts of the country and has aroused a magnificent spirit of enthusiasm among our people everywhere he has gone. But his great achievement lies in getting the young people in our Party engaged in useful jobs. He is a first-class propagandist himself and his great concern is to get our Socialist message over to the younger generation.

While others moan about difficulties in getting big meetings, in enrolling members, in selling literature, Maurice Hackett gets ahead with the job and shows how it can be done.

Let me give a simple illustration. Just a few evenings ago my office in The National Trade Union Club in New Oxford Street was invaded by some fifty young men and women. All were enquiring for Maurice Hackett. They had come ready to invade the busy thoroughfares of London with copies of "The New Nation"—the organ of the League of Youth and Herbert Morrison's "London News."

In a few minutes they were off in twos and threes to well-known London centres such as Oxford Circus, Trafalgar Square, Charing Cross, Marble Arch, and in less than an hour many of them were back—minus their copies. They had sold out and had returned for further supplies. In two hours they sold over three hundred copies of *The New Nation* and two hundred copies of *The London News*.

The value and importance of this

work cannot be exaggerated. People purchased these papers who had not heard of them previously. The presence of so many young people wearing red ties and selling literature attracted a great deal of attention. It was a fine advertisement for the League of Youth apart from anything else.

The invasion of London streets is to continue. Each week Leaguers are to be out selling *The New Nation*. What Maurice Hackett has done so successfully in London must be followed up in Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham and all the big industrial cities.

The moan that we cannot sell literature is just futile. We can if we set about it in the spirit of enthusiasm. Just imagine what a fine fillup to our various papers it would be if as many copies were sold on other evenings in other towns. It would be good to hear that provincial comrades will take up the idea.

There is just one other thing to which I would like to make reference this month and that is to the national camp that is being organised at Hoddesdon during August. By this time everyone who reads these notes will have heard of Hoddesdon. It is the home of our first Socialist youth hostel and is a centre which is doing fine work for our movement. Every week-end you will find a bonny crowd of youngsters there all helping to keep the place in decent order, all taking a live interest in Party work and keen to discuss problems that really matter.

Well, during August young Socialists are coming to Hoddesdon for the first national camp to be organised in this country. An attendance of several hundred is anticipated. There will be all sorts of social functions, dances, rambles, camp fire talks, lectures, discussions and propaganda activities. It is going to be really a big affair. Young people are coming to it from all over the country. Yes, the Rothermere organs may delight to talk about the magnificent

(Please turn to page 104.)

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW?

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1. What is meant by the phrase "Rules of Debate"?
 2. When and how was the ineligibility of women for election to Parliament removed?
 3. In what respect are the presented accounts of Local Parties often deficient?
 4. In what way are minors debarred from election to (a) Parliament (b) Local Government Bodies?
 5. Some Local Councils are elected triennially, others hold annual elections, electing each year one third of their number. To what Bodies does this apply and how does the difference arise?
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CAN YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS?

STUDY YOUR ANSWERS

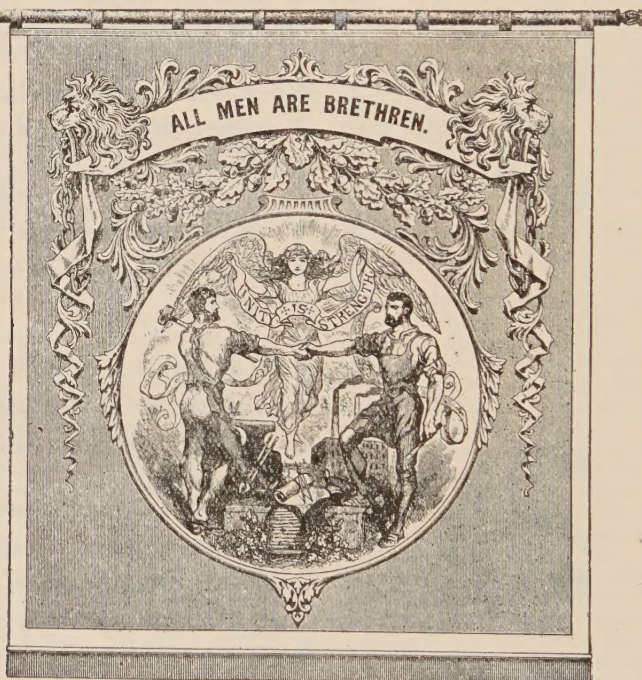
then turn to page 108.

manner in which youth is responding to the Blackshirt call, but we who are active in the Labour movement can tell another story. The progress made by the League of Youth these last months has been greater than our most optimistic organisers anticipated. It has been quiet but persistent and reflects great credit on those directing the campaign.

Well, this national camp will give young Socialists from all over the country a unique opportunity of

meeting each other. It will help to promote a great spirit of fellowship among League members. It will help us all to realise what our problems are and will enable us to understand each other even better than we do now.

If you can come to Hoddesdon at August—or for that matter at any other time — get into touch with Maurice Hackett, Theobald's House, 35, Gray's Inn Road, W.C.1.



We illustrate above one of the magnificent banners supplied by Messrs. Tutill, to which we drew attention in our last issue. This banner is woven of pure silk of uniform strength and quality in one piece without seams, and in every way it is *the best*. Our readers are warned to be aware of banners weighted with die and chemicals, for in wear the die, etc., will disappear.

The silk in these banners is guaranteed to be unweighted and pure. Scrolls and ornamental work may be either woven in or painted, the first process naturally being the more expensive one. Special designs

and inscriptions are painted on both sides to order.

Our readers will be interested to know that Mr. Tutill is making the Sports Trophy Bannerette for the T.U.C. This bannerette is to be presented at the forthcoming Tolpuddle Demonstration.

In addition to the silk banners mentioned, there are those made of wool bunting, and also of sateen where something inexpensive is required. All new banners are insured against fire, the first premium being paid by the above firm. Banners may be sent to Mr. Tutill for repair.

TIPS, NEW AND OLD

Here is a means of saving the cost of billposting and for making a permanent reduction in publicity costs for meetings and election posters, particularly in County Divisions. Get the handy men of your Party to knock together a number of notice boards 31 by 21 inches, or if you use demy posters 36 by 23 inches. Procure also a number of 7 feet lengths of quartering which need only be 2 by 2 inches. Two posts are required for each notice board, and then permission should be secured from supporters to place same in their gardens or grounds so that each notice board secures good prominence. This method has been *tried* and proves far cheaper than fly posting or orthodox billposting; besides which it serves the Party all the year round.

Every election agent knows the difficulties that sometimes arise because promised speakers, owing to various uncertainties cannot always be fitted in to particular meetings without holding up the printing until these uncertainties are solved. This difficulty occurs also in local elections. Far better than to definitely advertise speakers for a meeting which they may not attend, and to place them afterwards at a meeting for which they are not advertised, is a plan adopted in many places. The whole of one's available speakers are announced on the advertisements with the intimation that speakers from this panel are supporting the candidate and some of them will speak at the particular meeting. This idea whets the appetite and creates curiosity. Another plan sometimes adopted is to announce the candidate and "Leading Labour Speakers." "Labour Councillors" or such other general term as seems best likely to draw.

The enthusiast for selling literature who always had his pocket full of pamphlets is not so much in evidence nowadays. Yet it pays to encourage sales this way. Make it known among your members that it is desired that some members should carry a few pamphlets with them to

work, to their Trades Union Branch, or even to the football match — in season. Procure some stout envelopes and have several packets of pamphlets made up; three or four sorts of penny pamphlets can be put in each with not more than six altogether to an envelope. This plan *does* work, and it increases sales—any damaged pamphlets or lost ones are covered by the profits.

Has it ever occurred to you that curiosity is the nucleus from which outdoor meetings grow? The opening speaker who talks in quiet conversational tones at the commencement nearly always gets his crowd quicker than the man who tries to reach the horizon. Curiosity should be fed; what better than a skeleton poster giving the name of your Party with a space for the speaker, as below. Where more than one speaker is to speak it is a good plan to procure sheets of paper, the width of the poster and three inches deep and to write or stencil each speaker's name on a slip. Even the act of making the change excites curiosity and the information given to the audience in this way is more effective than any announcement by the Chairman.

WORKWELL LABOUR PARTY.

OUTDOOR CAMPAIGN.

Now speaking:

MR. WILL POLLWELL,

Prospective Candidate North Ward.

For information about the Labour Party, or for membership form apply any night, any time, to Secretary, Labour Hall, Willwin Street.

Illustrated meeting handbil's, leaflets and literature generally is always far more effective than mere ordinary letterpress. Have you begun to collect your designs, cartoons, blocks, etc., in readiness for your next elections? It is far better to look after these things beforehand because election time is often too late to procure promptly just what you

want. Some election agents have a flair in this direction and never let a likely cartoon or illustration pass their notice without taking a note and procuring a lien on the block or an electro for future use. A good stock of blocks is a real asset.

A good idea comes with an agenda from Birmingham. The Birmingham Borough Labour Party have recently used a form of agenda for certain meetings which has much to commend it. The items on the agenda are entirely confined to the left-hand side of the sheet of paper, the right-hand portion being left free for delegates' notes. By this means delegates are prompted to take a note of decisions and they are much better able to give reports to their organisations of decisions taken.

POT POURRI

The Ilford Labour Party are making a determined effort to raise their present membership to 3,000. Last year's income from individual membership reached the handsome total of £387 11s. 10d. This was a decrease of £7 11s. 0d. on the previous year, but as we explained to our readers in a recent issue, there are problems connected with the consolidation of a large membership which must not be overlooked, and the handling of which may account from time to time for a slight temporary decrease both in membership and total income. This Party is one of all round activity, and we note among other energies that Ilford has a Labour Choir which secured the first place in the London Labour Choral Union Competition.

The Mile End Divisional Labour Party, which has a peculiar problem owing to the migratory character of a large section of its electorate, held its own in membership during the past year, the total number of members at the end of the year being 1,595. Contributions from this source amounted to £224 17s. 8d. There are nearly forty voluntary membership collectors. We are interested to note that the Mile End D.L.P. in addition to the normal Party activities run a Loan Club, the turnover of which last year was over £2,000.

A highly interesting analytical summary of Labour representation in the County of Durham has been published by the Durham Federation. Owing to the temporary madness of 1931 the statement regarding Parliamentary representation is not, of course, such pleasing reading as some previous issues of this summary, but the following totals show what the people really think in the County of Durham.

	Labour	Others
County Council ...	80	19
Borough Councils ...	27	60
U.D.C's ...	265	142
R.D.C's ...	193	178
Parish Councils	814	436
Public Assistance and Guardian Committees ...	301	59

The printed summary, of course, gives details of the particular bodies.

The National Trades Union Club (24/28, New Oxford Street, W.C.1, have now opened a Snack Bar and Cafeteria in addition to its usual services. This will be a welcome item for provincial readers visiting London. It is also worth mentioning that the Club are always glad to receive enquiries of special luncheons, tea and dinner parties, the catering for which is of the best.

(Concluded from page 116.)

of the Chairman of a District Council . . . the County Council shall order an election to be held on a day appointed by them. If the District Council becomes unable to act whether from there being a failure to elect or otherwise, the County Council may appoint persons to form the District Council until the newly elected members come into office."

We are not at all sure whether our correspondent has fully stated the point made by the clerk. After all, the election took place, each nominee received six votes, and therefore neither of them was elected. The actual situation is that no chairman has been elected; for a fresh election there must be a fresh proposal of nominees. Anyway, it is quite clear that the Council has no Chairman and that the County Council has power to cut the Gordian knot.



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HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW?

FOR QUESTIONS, SEE PAGE 103.

Answer to Question 1.

The phrase "Rules of Debate" is a colloquialism often used and almost as often abused. In fact the term is sometimes used in circumstances when as the Irishman said "there ain't any." Such elementary "rules" as do exist are much more properly referred to as customs, as, for instance, the appointment of a Chairman to keep order; the obligation of a speaker to obey the Chairman, and the right of a speaker within the latter limits to a fair hearing.

Custom is also sometimes said to be based on the proceedings of the House of Commons, though heaven forbid that this doctrine should be carried too far.

There are no enactments in law which govern public speaking and debate, other than the punishment meted out by the Public Meetings Act, 1908, to a person acting in a disorderly manner for the purpose of preventing the transaction of business at a Parliamentary Election meeting. Certain specified proceedings for particularised public bodies are, however, sometimes laid down in Acts governing the proceedings of such bodies.

Besides the above-mentioned matters custom may also be said to govern certain other well-known matters connected with the conduct of meetings: thus resolutions usually require a mover and seconder; there is a right of amendment vested in the meeting; speakers must address the chair, and so on. But custom cannot be said to extend to the more elaborate points of order, and sometimes different rulings are given by different writers in textbooks upon this subject.

In the absence of statutory, or any other authoritative, guidance most bodies and corporations will embody the rules for the conduct of meetings and debate within themselves in what are known as Standing Orders. Rules necessarily vary according to the nature of the organisation. The Standing Orders of, say, a building Society might not prove the best for those of, say, a Local Labour Party

or Trades Council. Standing Orders should be drafted with a view to the expedition of the business of the particular organisation for whose use they are drafted, and they should, of course, be drafted and submitted in the first place, at any rate, by those having some competence in the matter.

Answer to Question 2.

By common law and immemorial usage Parliament was the exclusive preserve of men for hundreds of centuries. A woman might neither elect to or be elected to the House of Commons.

The partial enfranchisement of women which took place under the Representation of the People Act, 1918, created a new situation inasmuch as women might then, for the first time, elect to Parliament. The Representation of the People Act received the royal assent on 6th February, 1918, but on the 21st November of the first year an Act to amend the law with respect to the incapacity of women to sit in Parliament also received the royal assent. This, one of the shortest Acts on record, merely indicated that "A woman shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage for being elected to or sitting or voting as a member of the Commons House of Parliament." The Act is cited as The Parliament (Qualification of Women) Act, 1918.

It is interesting to record that prior to the passing of the latter Act doubts had been expressed as to whether the enfranchisement of women had actually varied the existing situation and removed a disqualification which had been nowhere by statute expressed. Certain women candidates had announced their intention to stand for Parliament, notably the late Miss Mary MacArthur, who was the first woman candidate to be adopted in Great Britain. Miss MacArthur's intention was, if elected, to fight the constitutional issue, but the qualifying Act referred to was passed prior to the General Election which took place in the same year.

Answer to Question 3.

If one choose to pun upon this question one might perhaps answer in cash balances! The question is, however, one relating to presentation rather than contents, and in this respect the outstanding omission is nearly always that of a balance sheet. Statements which merely give income and expenditure, or the cash income and cash expenditure of a Party—different things by-the-way—obviously do not present to the members the whole financial position. A substantial cash balance may in fact be wholly fictitious, if presuming to show an actual balance belonging to the organisation. The true financial position of an organisation does not appear unless in addition to the statement of accounts a balance sheet is presented showing both assets and liabilities. Even where there are no liabilities it is not proper to omit the presentation of a balance sheet, for there will be assets, for no organisation will exactly balance its income and expenditure each year without showing either a cash liability or a cash asset. The presentation of a balance sheet has the additional value, even in the smallest organisation, of keeping count of such assets as are accumulated from year to year during normal working.

Answer to Question 4.

It might be thought that common law and usage would have prevented those under age from assuming the responsibilities of public service in an elected capacity. This, however, is not so, and at one time minors on occasions secured election to Parliament, and acted therein. Doubts on the question were put at rest in the reign of William III, and in 1695 an Act was passed which laid it down that "no person hereafter shall be capable of being elected a member to serve in this or in future Parliaments who is not of the age of twenty-one years, and every election or return of any person under that age is hereby declared to be null and void." The penalty for presumption to serve in Parliament is a heavy one.

So far as the elections of minors to Local Governing bodies is concerned, the position was none too satisfactory till the coming into force of the Local Government Act, 1933, on the 1st of the present month. No direct dis-

qualification of infants had been imposed by the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882. At the passing of that Act minors could not be registered as electors and therefore could not be elected, but with the extension of qualification by later legislation some doubts arose; in some cases minors, possessing the newer qualifications, were elected, and this applied also to County Councils. Infants were disqualified for election to Urban and Rural District Councils, Parish Councils and Metropolitan Borough Councils, by the Local Government Act, 1894.

Section 57 of the Local Government Act, 1933, now lays down that a person to be qualified to be elected must be of full age. This applies to all Local Governing bodies and removes all doubts upon the subject.

Answer to Question 5.

Four practices are in vogue relating to the retirement of Councillors.

In Municipal Boroughs one-third of the Councillors retire each year and it is not permissible to alter this practice, which is laid down by Section 13 of the Municipal Corporations Act.

In the case of County Councils the Councillors are elected for a term of three years and retire altogether. It is not permissible to alter this practice which is laid down by Section 2 of the Local Government Act, 1888.

Metropolitan Borough Councils are governed by the provisions of the London Government Act, 1899, and by virtue of Section 2 (8) of this Act an application was made to the Ministry some years ago to enable the elections for Metropolitan Borough Councils to be held every three years, all the Councillors retiring together.

Urban District Councils and Rural District Councils are now governed by the Local Government Act, 1933. The ordinary procedure is that one-third of the Councillors shall retire each year. But the *County Council* has power, on application to the District Council, which has been carried by a two-thirds majority, to order the election to take place triennially.

The same power existed under the Local Government Act, 1894, with the exception that under the latter act Urban District Councils required a two-thirds majority to carry the change, while Rural District Councils required only a bare majority.

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Continued from our last issue.

A New Digest of Local Government Election Law

Nominations (Borough and C.C. Elections).

Important alterations are made in several matters relating to the nominations for Borough and County Councils.

The nomination paper previously prescribed by the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, is repealed, and a new principle is introduced into Municipal and County Council elections in this regard. Nomination papers are to be "in the form prescribed by the Secretary of State."* Enquiries we have made show that the form has not yet been prescribed, but the Home Office has apparently approached certain quarters with a draft of the proposed form and it may be assumed therefore that the same is now practically ready for issue.

A candidate's consent to nomination is now required and must be given in writing on, or within, one month before the last day for the delivery of nomination papers, and must be attested by one witness. The paper is to be delivered at the time or within the time appointed for the delivery of nomination papers. In the case of a casual election a candidate being abroad may telegraph his assent to nomination.

The wording of the Act seems to envisage the possibility of a candidate being able to give his consent to nomination in a general way, rather than in a particular way as to any one nomination paper, and this appears more when one has regard to the fact that at a General Election of Councillors there is no provision for a candidate being abroad.

At the same time, we understand that suggestions have been put before the Secretary of State for the

purpose of combining the nomination paper and the form of consent in one form. This will work all right, provided there is no provision in the prescribed form which debars a candidate from consenting to nomination prior to the form being filled up, a provision which we think would be contrary to the spirit of the rules.

The rules still provide for the nomination paper to be signed by a proposer and seconder, and eight other local government electors "for the electoral division, borough or ward, as the case may be." No person must sign more than one nomination paper or more nominations than there are vacancies to be filled in respect of the same electoral division, borough or ward as the case may be. If he does so validity is only given to the paper or papers first delivered.

It is provided that the "proper officer" shall provide nomination papers and supply any L.G. elector with "as many nomination papers as may be required," and what is always quaint and interesting "he shall, at the request of any L.G. elector, prepare for signature a nomination paper."

Nomination papers must be delivered in accordance with the table published in our last issue, and as soon as may be after the time for delivery of nomination papers has expired the returning officer at a County Council election, or the Mayor in a Borough Election, is to examine the papers "and decide whether the candidates have been validly nominated in accordance with the provisions." It will be noted there is no jurisdiction over qualification.

The decision given in accordance with the last paragraph is final where it is held that a candidate is validly nominated, and open to review on election petition where it is held that the candidate has not been validly nominated. The R.O. or the Mayor, as the case may be, must send a notice of his decision to each candidate.

It is important to note that pro-

*Readers who as elected Councillors are familiar with the relations of County Councils and Municipal Corporations with the Ministry of Health will do well to remember that as regards elections the Home Office is the responsible Department of State. The Ministry of Health is concerned with boundaries, though the division of an area into wards is also a matter for the Home Office. It is important to remember this delineation.

visions for objections are entirely swept away. A candidate may withdraw by giving written notice of withdrawal, *attested by a witness*, and delivered within the time stated in the schedule published in our last issue.

A radical rule is now laid down regarding candidates nominated in more than one electoral division or ward. A candidate may only stand for one division or ward, and, if nominated for more than one, must by notice, signed, attested and delivered to the returning officer or Mayor withdraw from all divisions or wards except one. If he does not so withdraw he is to be deemed to have withdrawn from every nomination and so drops out altogether. This is the parable of the dog, the shadow and the bone likely at some time to have a practical illustration.

An interesting point relating to nominations is that a local government elector is deemed to be registered if his name appears in the register which will be in force on the day of election or if pending the coming into force of that register his name appears in the electors' lists for that register as corrected by the registration officer. The latter provision is, of course, intended to cover a delay in printing or publication of the register.

The Poll.

As previously provided notice of poll must be given in the case of a contested election.

It is now laid down that the published nomination paper is to be the *first* valid nomination paper delivered at the place appointed for the delivery of nomination papers. This is a point to be carefully considered, because if one desires a particular nomination paper published one must be careful to get it in early if there is any danger of some enthusiast forestalling an official with another nomination.

The Act which has amended so many things has not extended the hour of polling which will be as heretofore from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. A candidate's death before the commencement of the poll avoids the election and the Returning Officer must countermand the poll.

The provisions for the appointment of Polling Agents neglect to state how many may be appointed. Each candidate may appoint polling agents

to attend at the Polling Stations, and notice in writing of the appointment must be given by *the candidate* to the Returning Officer *two clear days* at least before the opening of the poll. Note the new provision laying down that notice *shall* be given. We are of opinion that one Polling Agent per station is the limit to which a candidate may appoint.

A revision has been made in the form but not in the substance of the questions which may be put to an elector applying for a ballot paper. The questions may be put at the presiding officer's discretion, at the request of a candidate or polling agent, or at the request of two Local Government Electors. It is now provided that, save as provided regarding these questions, no inquiry shall be permitted as to the right of any person to vote.

The provisions of the Blind Voters Act (the Act was reproduced in our January issue) are now embodied in the present Act. It should be specially noted that an agent is not, as such, entitled to assist a blind elector to vote, this privilege being limited to an elector or the father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, son or daughter of the blind elector, being twenty-one years of age.

All other provisions relating to the conduct of the poll are substantially as before.

The Count.

Counting agents (number unspecified) may be appointed to attend the counting of the votes. *Two clear days* at least before the opening of the poll the names of such agents must be given by notice in writing to the Returning Officer. Note that formerly one clear day's notice only was required.

Candidates may be present at the counting of the votes.

An antiquated provision of the Ballot Act requiring the consent of the agents to the count taking place between 7 o'clock at night and 9 o'clock on the succeeding morning is amended to agree with the hours to which the poll is open: the hours to which this provision now applies are 8 p.m. to 9 a.m.

The Returning Officer is still given a casting vote in the case of equality of voting, whether or not he was entitled to vote in the first instance.

The declaration of secrecy, which,

of course, must be taken by every polling and counting agent authorised to attend at a polling station, or at the counting of the votes, has been amended in form and now reads

"I solemnly promise and declare that I will not at this election do anything forbidden by sub-paragraphs 4, 5, 6 and 8 of paragraph 54 of part 3 of the second schedule to the Local Government Act, 1933, which have been read by me."

Note the phrase is "by me," and not, as formerly, "to me," and that

the obligation of the person swearing in the person to read the appropriate passage over to the declarant is not now in force. Apparently a *candidate* does not require to be sworn into secrecy.

All the other provisions relating to the count are substantially the same as heretofore.

(Next month—Miscellaneous Provisions.)

(*Readers in Scotland are asked to note that the Local Government Act, 1933, does not apply to Scotland.*)

PRINT AND PRINTING

A USEFUL ARTICLE REPRINTED.

The smaller the type, the shorter the measure (width) should be: 5 point should never be set wider than 14 ems, 6 point—18 ems, 8 point—26 ems, 12 point—50 ems.

Of course, in estimating space, due allowance must be made for paragraphing, short lines, etc. If in doubt, always write *less* copy. It is an easy matter for the printer to "white out" a little. A printer can always expand, but he cannot contract: when the type is set.

Various Classes of Type.

Type is roughly divided into two classes: body type and display type. Body type, as its name implies, is used for all matter not requiring display. Display type is bolder than body type, and is used for those lines requiring prominence, such as headlines, sub-headings, special points, names and addresses, etc. The faces of body types most frequently used are Old Style Roman and Modern Roman. The following specimen will show the difference between these two styles:—

12 Point Old Style Roman.

The profound thinker always suspects that he is superficial.

12 Point Modern Roman

The profound thinker always suspects that he is superficial.

Display types are made in sizes from 6 to 72 point. Some of the most frequently used are Cheltenham, Chatsworth, Caslon, Windsor, Venetian, and Wren.

In addition to ordinary body type and display type, note must be taken of "Italic" type. Italic is sloping type used for the purpose of emphasising and for making quotations.

Rules and Borders.

Every printer stocks a variety of plain rules, ornamental rules, and borders of various patterns. The rules, like the type, are on the point system, their sizes usually being 1, 1½, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 12 point. Ornamental borders can usually be had from 3 point to 24 point in size.

In printing offices small letters are known as lower case (usually referred to as "l.c.") and capital letters as "caps" or "upper case." The word "case" means the shallow box that holds the type; the "lower case" contains the small letters and the top or upper case the capitals.

Having explained these basic principles of typography, we will go on to deal with the Layout and Arrangement of Types, Rules, Borders, etc.

What follows is intended to explain the rules that should govern well-displayed printed matter.

I say "rules" because printing, like every other craft—including electioneering—has gone through a long period of aimless wandering, so far as definite and systematised effort is

concerned. Just as the making of munitions during the latter half of the war was governed by recognised rules which aimed at standardisation, so printing has now its "standard" general laws of display and "style." In addition to the Ford and corned beef, America has presented to us a conception of typographical display which is at once as pleasing as it is effective. The prevailing style of display used by all good-class printing houses is what is known as the "American" style.

The Elements of Display.

The main elements of display are: White space, display type, body type, borders, and illustrations. These must be used and arranged so as to get a "scheme" that will be in harmony with the subject and pleasing to the eye. In combining space and type, it is necessary to bear in mind that the chief rule of attractive display is concentration and contrast—which simply means that the main elements of type should be concentrated and that these should be contrasted with the white space.

White space is as important as type, because it adds prominence to the type itself. Too many users of

TRANQUILLITY

May be a much discussed
subject just now,

but few people can boast of enjoying
the blessings of 'tranquillity

Our goods for

CHRISTMAS

however,

are the very best obtainable
and

our Prices are the Lowest
Possible.

You can enjoy tranquillity — or its
nearest equivalent — by purchasing
your Christmas goods from

Bennett's Stores, Grocers and General
Dealers,
DOCKING AND STANHOE

A badly-displayed advertisement. Note the lack of form and the shameless anarchy in construction.

TRANQUILLITY

may be a much discussed
subject just now, but few
people can boast of enjoying
the blessings of tranquillity.
Our goods for

CHRISTMAS

however, are the very best
obtainable, and our prices are
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enjoy tranquillity — or its
nearest equivalent — by pur-
chasing your Christmas goods
from

BENNETT'S STORES

Grocers & General Dealers
DOCKING & STANHOE

A well-displayed advertisement. Note that it possesses shape and form, and that dominating prominence is given to the two essential topical points.

print seem to think that every available square inch of space must be crowded with type, for fear of space going to "waste"! In practice, a crowded and badly-arranged announcement is unattractive and is passed by; whereas a "whited" and grouped announcement is always attractive.

Display type should be used judiciously. Too much display type amounts to no display. Bold display type should be used for the main headline and for the lines which are of secondary importance. One of the great advantages of using display type with discretion is that large areas of reading matter can be broken into more easily assimilated portions.

The unattractive effect of the first advert. is the result of using too many lines of display type. There is no definite contrast between display and text, and white space has not been effectively used. Compare this with the revised display in the second advert.

The Importance of Balance.

Balance plays a great part in securing attractability. A printed announcement that is unbalanced is sure to be unpleasant. A good general rule to

follow is to arrange for the main line to be as near the top as possible, and for a good secondary display line to be near the bottom. On no account should a weighty main line be placed below a line drawn halfway down the announcement, for this would leave the top half of the advert. weak, whilst the bottom half would be clumsy and would tend to ugliness. Where more than two display lines are necessary, they should be arranged so that they all comprise a well-organised and composite whole.

Ornamentation.

Ornamental rules and borders should be used with strict discretion. It is easy to overdo it. Grotesque or fanciful lettering, or an eccentric arrangement of type, merely gives the reader the hump and has the effect of sending him to some other announcement that is more easily read. Elaboration should be avoided. Simplicity should be observed.

Illustration.

Illustration is playing a greater part to-day than ever in the make-up of printed matter. In its application to political printing, there are two qualities that are essential: good taste and good draughtsmanship (in the case of drawings). Illustration, however, like ornamentation, should be used with discretion, and should only be used if it will add to the attractiveness of the announcement or article. Pictures help us to visualise, and I should imagine that, in the case of a very tired electorate, illustration can be used to the best advantage—seeing that it obviates the necessity of close thinking. In any case, good-class illustrations, whether half-tone or line drawings, can make any printed matter infinitely more attractive.

Models of Good Lay-Outs.

The election agent will not go far wrong if he makes his objective the attainment of effective, crisp, and pleasing typography, remembering always that it is he who is the wooer and the general public the wooed. And if a high standard of display is aimed at, the election agent would derive much profit from the study of the productions of the National Labour Press (the printers of the "Organiser"), the Caledonian Press, W. H. Smith & Sons, Bemrose &

Sons (Derby), Martin's (the tobacco people), "The Advertising World," "The British Printer," and such American publications as "The Inland Printer," "The American Printer," "The Printing Art," etc. In all these he will find typographical craftsmanship at its best.

The next article will deal with Paper and Ink.

(To be continued.)

BOURNEMOUTH.

FOOD REFORM GUEST HOUSE.

Loughtonhurst, West Cliff Gardens. Get right away from the Movement and have a holiday or rest with us. Terms from 49/- per week. Write Manager.

TWO NUTS TO CRACK

Nut No. 1.

An interesting point is raised by a correspondent in the following question.

"One of our prospective candidates for the Borough Council in November, has received from the Public Assistance Committee a weekly allowance for milk and eggs on the recommendation of the M.O.H. Will he be disqualified?"

Our first thoughts on this question were that a borderline case had been raised. However, on second thoughts we are inclined to strongly contend that the person mentioned is not disqualified. It is, after all, fair to assume that the Medical Officer of Health has prescribed the necessities mentioned as *a part of his treatment*, and it seems to us quite clear that it is as legitimate for a medical officer to order eggs and milk as to order some patent food or other nutrient or stimulant contained in a bottle.

It is, of course, conceivable that the medical officer might draw the attention of the Public Assistance Committee in any special case to the need for other relief, though in such a case it might well be said he was exceeding his duty, or going outside it. Such relief might take the form of food, but milk and eggs are so generally accepted as part of a doctor's prescription in certain cases

that it would be grossly unfair to characterise such items as being outside the term of medical treatment as used in the Act governing this question. We think that Labour men should hold strongly to the point of view we have expressed, not only on legal grounds but on public and humanitarian grounds.

Nut No. 2.

Here is a pretty pickle which has been brought to our notice by a correspondent.

The ——— Urban District Council in this district consists of 12 members. As a result of the recent elections there is a tie and when the Council met last Wednesday, they sat for 1½ hours without having elected a chairman for the year. Neither side would withdraw and no agreement was possible. The same situation will possibly continue indefinitely, barring illness or accident. A suggestion was made that both the names submitted should be withdrawn and an informal conversation held to see whether some agreement could be reached, but the clerk to the council said this could not be done unless all were unanimous on the withdrawal.

Is the clerk right? And failing agreement, what will be the position if the council cannot function?

Our correspondent's letter was dated 20th April, and a reply was sent to him by post. We are sorry that we have not to date heard what developments have taken place.

The circumstances named would, of course, have taken place prior to the coming into force of the Local Government Act, 1933, and Section 59 (5) of the Local Government Act, 1894, would apply. This section read as follows:—

"If any district council, other than a borough council, become unable to act, whether from failure to elect or otherwise, the county council of the county in which the district is situate may order elections to be held and may appoint persons to form the district council until the newly elected members come into office."

The Local Government (Elections) Act, 1896, also has application to the above situation. This Act reads:

"If any difficulty arises with respect to any election of

district councillors or if from an election not being held or being defective or otherwise the Council . . . has not been properly constituted the County Council may by order make any appointment or do anything which appears to them necessary or expedient for the proper holding of any such election . . . and properly constituting the council . . . and may if it appears to them necessary direct the holding of an election . . . and fix the date for any such election . . ."

It should be noted that action taken by the County Council in April under the provisions above quoted would have been the best way of dealing with a district council evenly divided as to the election of its chairman. Both these enactments have now been repealed, but they are substantially re-enacted in Section 72 of the Local Government Act, 1933. The provisions here are even clearer and the applicable one is as follows:—

"If for any reason an election is not held on the appointed day or within the appointed time, or fails wholly or in part or becomes void, then . . . in the case of an election

(Continued on page 106.)

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